

Thus, if the wizard shows up on reel 2, then all of the symbols of reel 2 appearing on a payline will effectually become wildcards.

[0012] “Break the Spell” utilizes the wizard in bonus gaming as well. In the bonus round the player is allowed to select one of five frogs displayed on the screen. The selected frog is then transformed by the wizard into a new character or symbol revealing the amount of the bonus award if any.

[0013] While Atronic reveals a symbol which interacts with additional symbols of an array, the wizard only interacts with symbols located on the same reel upon which the wizard appears. Additionally, the wizard automatically interacts with any and all symbols located on that particular reel and which are positioned within a payline. Thus, there is no randomness regarding which symbols will be transformed by the wizard. Additionally, the wizard always changes a symbol on a given payline to a new symbol which will result in a win on that payline. Thus, there is also a lack or randomness with regard to the resultant transformation of a symbol. Additionally, “Break the Spell” fails to incorporate any player interaction other than the selection of one of the five identical symbols displayed during the bonus round.

[0014] Another example includes Spintek Gaming Technologies’ Morph’un™ gaming device. The Morph’un™ gaming device includes a five reel video slot game wherein certain symbols, when matched on a payline, morph or change into another symbol. The new symbols act as multipliers to the base win amount. The amount of the multiplier is affected by the number of “morph” symbols located on a given payline.

[0015] However, similar to Atronic’s device, there is no randomness regarding which of the symbols on a given payline will interact with each other, nor is there any randomness in what the subsequent outcome will be for such an interaction. Additionally, Morph’un™ fails to incorporate player control or interaction in selecting which symbols should interact with one another. Rather, the interaction between any symbols in the “Morph’un” game is automatic upon the matching of morph symbols on a given payline.

[0016] There is a continued need to improve gaming methods and devices with respect to their ability to attract and maintain player attention. Thus, in view of the shortcomings in the art, it would be advantageous to provide a gaming device and method which incorporates at least one interactive symbol for interacting with at least one other symbol to produce a third distinct symbol through randomness and/or player interaction.

[0017] It would additionally be advantageous to provide a gaming device and method with the perception of potentially increasing or adding to the winnings of a primary game’s initial outcome by alteration of the primary game’s initial outcome and without the need to resort to conventional bonus type gaming.

[0018] Additionally, it would be advantageous to provide a gaming device and method which more easily attracts and maintains the interest of a player through potential interaction and the perception of potentially increased winnings.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0019] In accordance with one aspect of the invention a method of conducting a game of chance is provided. The

method includes providing a player with an opportunity to place a wager and displaying a randomly generated combination of symbols in response thereto. Additionally, at least one interactive symbol is displayed in conjunction with the randomly generated combination of symbols. At least one symbol is randomly selected from the displayed combination of symbols for perceived interaction with the interactive symbol. The at least one symbol is then perceptibly transformed through perceived interaction with the at least one interactive symbol. The perceived transformation may result in the display of an award, such as a number of credits or a multiplier, or, alternatively, the perceived transformation may result in the display of a new and different symbol. If a new and different symbol results from the transformation, any paylines associated with the transformed symbol are potentially altered.

[0020] In accordance with another aspect of the invention, another method of conducting a game of chance is provided. The method includes providing a player with an opportunity to place a wager and displaying a randomly generated combination of symbols in response thereto. Additionally, at least one interactive symbol is displayed in conjunction with the randomly generated combination of symbols. The player is then provided with an opportunity to stimulate perceived interaction between the interactive symbol and at least one of the combination of symbols. Upon such perceived interaction, the at least one symbol is then perceptibly transformed into another symbol or indicia of some other award.

[0021] In accordance with another aspect of the invention, yet another method of conducting a game of chance is provided. The method includes providing a player with an opportunity to place a wager and randomly selecting at least one combination of symbols in response to the wager being placed. The combination of symbols is displayed including at least one interactive symbol. The combination of symbols, less the interactive symbol, is then perceptibly replaced with new symbols. At least one of the new symbols is then transformed into a new symbol through perceived interaction with the interactive symbol. Alternatively, an indicia of an award might result from the perceived transformation.

[0022] In accordance with yet another aspect of the invention, a gaming device is provided. The gaming device includes a display configured to exhibit a combination of symbols selected from a plurality of symbols including at least one interactive symbol. The device also includes a random number generator for randomly selecting the combination of symbols from the plurality of symbols and, upon selection of the interactive symbols, randomly selecting at least one other symbol of the combination of symbols to perceptibly transform the at least one other symbol into a different symbol.

[0023] In accordance with another aspect of the invention, another gaming device is provided. The gaming device includes a display configured to exhibit a combination of symbols selected from a plurality of symbols including at least one interactive symbol. The device also includes a random number generator for randomly selecting the combination of symbols from the plurality of symbols. Additionally, an input device is included whereby a player, upon selection of the interactive symbol by the random number generator as one of the combination of symbols, may select at least one other symbol of the combination causing the at